



# Go Figure!

AUCKLAND ICE FIGURE SKATING CLUB NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2006

## From the President

I would like to start off with a "Well-done" to all our club skaters who competed at the New Zealand National Champs held at the Botany Ice Arena the week of 18th September 2006. Congratulations to all those skaters who were invited to the selection competition for the Australian Nationals, (in May, 2007, date and venue to be advised); congratulations also to the age-group skaters who were named for the development tiers.

The Annual General Meeting of the Auckland Ice Figure Skating Club will be on Sunday, 26th November, at the Botany Ice Arena – starting at 4.45pm. This year we will be holding a Christmas Fun Skate during the AGM for all club members and their immediate families – the ice is booked until 6.45pm. This fun-filled afternoon activity should give parents the opportunity to attend the AGM – all members are welcome!

The final session of tests will be held at Botany Ice Arena on Thursday night, 23rd November 2006. For anyone wanting to take a test, the forms need to be received by the club secretary or myself within the next week.

As if all this doesn't make a busy finish to the year for our club, we also have the Glenburn Gala and the Allegro La Pat for those who would like to compete. (See the notification elsewhere in the newsletter.)

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish all our members and their families, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. For those of you who are going away: drive carefully, arrive safely and have a wonderful holiday!

*Dael Haynes*  
President, AIFSC

### 2006 Committee:

Dael Haynes (President)  
Ph 272 3536

Chris Pulman (Vice-President)  
Ph 834 6686

Melissah Gallagher (Secretary)

Nick Winspear (Treasurer)

Sue Harries  
Deborah Ley  
Jacqueline Prowse  
Ray Pulman  
Wendy Quigley  
Bob Rout  
Lenore Thode  
Scott Thode  
Delwyn Watson

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Contributions to this newsletter are always welcome. Please send articles, items for sale, etc., to Deborah Ley ([ley.family@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ley.family@xtra.co.nz)).

## AUCKLAND ICE FIGURE SKATING CLUB

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

26th November 2006 at 4:30pm

Paradice Ice Arena

490 Ti Rakau Drive, Botany Downs

*Ho ho ho!*  
*Christmas is coming*

AIFSC invites all CLUB MEMBERS to our

*Christmas Skating Party*

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2006

4:45pm – 6:45pm at Paradice, Botany Downs



## Competition Results

### National Championships 2006

Congratulations to the following Auckland Figure Skating Club members who competed at the National Championships in September. Full results can be found at [www.nzisa.com](http://www.nzisa.com) and click on “**Complete Nationals Results**”

#### JUVENILE LADIES

- 2 Iyryn QUIGLEY
- 4 Eerina WATKINS
- 6 Alexandra LEY
- 9 Christina FLOKA
- 10 Amber HARRIES
- 11 Zoe CAMERON-BROWN
- 12 Amelia PROWSE

#### PRE PRIMARY LADIES

- 6 Winnie WONG
- 9 Esther GAN
- 11 Hannah McAVOY

#### PRIMARY LADIES

- 3 Yuko TANAKA

#### JUNIOR LADIES

- 2 Alexandra ROUNT

#### SENIOR LADIES

- 2 Caitlin HAYNES

#### SENIOR MEN

- 1 Joel WATSON
- 2 Tristan THODE

#### JUVENILE SYNCHRONIZED

- 1 Botany Bladettes

#### NOVICE SYNCHRONIZED

- 1 Botany Blades

#### SENIOR SYNCHRONIZED

- 1 Botany Ice Statix

## THE CHAMPION'S CREED

**I am not judged by  
 the number of times I fail,  
 but by the number  
 of times I succeed, and  
 The number of times I  
 Succeed is in direct proportion to  
 the number of times I can fail  
 and keep trying.**

## Music: The Magic of Figure Skating

Figure skating is indeed a very special sport where the technical ability of the skaters is strictly connected with their creativity, their musicality, and their ability to convey to the audience their inner feelings.

Figure skating is a sport, but a sport with something more. And this something more is its artistic component. Figure skating is music. Without music our sport cannot exist, without music our sport would lose the strength of its expression. It is the music which gives a sense to the compound of the elements and their sequence in a program.

The skater skates his music, he feels it, he lives it and gives back to the audience the feelings and the emotions that that particular music inspires in him.

Figure skating, as I define it, is a “physical art”: it reflects an understanding and interpretation of the music through harmonious and elegant movements, in the same way ballet does. Both ballet and figure skating are inspired by the music.

The bridge between figure skating and art is music, and it is through music that the skater expresses his or her inner feelings and shares them with the spectators. All the elements of a free program are the means by which the competitors communicate with the audience. Further more, the value of the entire program depends on how all of these technically difficult elements are blended together to compose the program. The fact that a jump is landed on the exact beat of the music, for instance, adds value to it.

The music should be understood as the best part of the ability of a skater to rouse the interest of all those watching him – public, judges, fans – and capture their attention.

The music is the first step in inventing a new program. The construction of a free program must correspond to the musical structure of the piece of music chosen. The skater must give a sense to the music chosen through the composition of the program which means an harmonious distribution of all the elements, jumps, spins, lifts and steps over the ice surface.

The skater, the ice, the space and the movements must compose a unique whole. The structure of the program must be dictated by the music and the sequence of the elements, each movement, each position or gesture must be inspired by it. For example a beat of the music can be underlined by a special movement, by the landing of a jump, or, in case of a jump needing a long preparation, the jump itself could be executed at the climax of a phrasing of the music as if the music itself was leading the competitor to that jump, as if the jump or the lift were the natural conclusion of a melody.

Every detail is important, is vital for the harmony and the perfection of the program. As in a masterpiece of Michelangelo or Leonardo da Vinci, for instance, at first sight one does not notice all the details which compose the fresco, but the details are there and they are important to achieve the perfection of the painting or, as in our case, of a free program.

To express the music a skater must use the entire body, not only his arms; he must fill and give life to the space with a variety of movements and gestures, and each movement and gesture must be completed, and have a definite meaning, like a word in a poem, and must be in harmony with the music, its speed, and its intensity.

Once again it is the music which dictates a program, and transforms the sport into a performance – into a kind of art. Without music, figure skating simply cannot exist. Without a deep understanding of the music, the sport could exist but it would lose its deeper connotation and its impact with the audience and the judges as well.

The music must have an immediate appeal to all the judges on the panel and this, some times, can create some difficulties. There are from 9 to 12 judges on a panel from different countries, different cultures, of different ages and with different tastes, and they can only hear the music a couple of times before the competition. This is why it is of vital importance that the music has an immediate appeal to all the judges. It is therefore advisable that the skaters avoid any type of strange or unknown pieces of music, which are difficult to understand and feel. Nothing is worse for a skater than a piece of music perceived by the judges as a “nightmare”, a dreadful noise lasting too long.

The choice of the music is vital because it has to enhance the skater's personality, talent and technical capability. To be able to select the best possible music for a pupil, the coach or the choreographer must know the skater thoroughly. Not only their temperament and character; but also their technical ability, style and speed. A slow skater with fast music will appear even slower; and a beginning skater will just be killed by a famous symphony!

Originality is another important feature. A great skater should also be original and innovative. A skater is not considered original because of their hair style, make up or spectacular costume. Originality must be expressed either by inventing some new movements – new entries or positions in spins or in spirals, new dismounts in lifts – or by the choice of a special kind of music and the way it is interpreted. For instance a competitor may just copy a classic ballet or create a new choreography more suitable to their personality or to the ice.

For the free programme a skater may choose either different pieces of music (harmoniously blended together for the duration foreseen by the rules), or select the music of a single composer; a unique theme with variations of speed, including a slow part. Since the early 1990s, this second option is the favourite. What is most important is that the programme impresses, gives an artistic emotion and is remembered as something that one would enjoy seeing again and again.

The structure of the programme must be designed for the music chosen to enhance the skater's qualities. The sequence of the elements must follow the logic imposed by the music itself; each movement, each gesture, each position, must be inspired by the music and be consonant with it. The skater must give a sense to the piece of music selected through an harmonious composition of the programme and a well-balanced distribution over the whole ice surface of all the technical elements: jumps, spins, lifts or steps.

Only when the skater understands and loves the music, will their gestures, positions and movements will be understood and appreciated by the audience and the judges. The choreography must bring the audience to immediately understand the story the skater intends to tell. It must raise their interest, capture their attention and retain it through the entire programme.

It is also important that the skater underlines the variations of the speed and the tempo of the music through arm movements and positions and expresses its rhythm with their entire body. The increasing tempo of the music, for instance, can also be underlined by the increasing speed of the rotation in a spin.

Melodic and slow parts of the music can be underlined by long steps with deep edges, spirals or spread eagles and ample gestures of the arms. Once again, it is the music that dictates a free programme, that transforms sport into a kind of art. To learn to feel the music and to interpret it, is as difficult, if not more, as to learn to execute the technical requirements of the sport itself. The perception and the expression of the music is what makes the difference between a skater and a champion.

To interpret the music does not mean to skate to the tempo of the music or to move the arms up and down like a robot. It means much more than that. It means to live the music, to skate with passion, with the heart; it means to express one's interior drama with the entire body. Each move of a hand, or every turn of the head must make sense with the music, the skater must really feel it, he must live an emotion and must succeed in giving it back to the audience, the judges and the entire world.

Watching a high-standard competition is exciting for the difficulty of the elements executed but, at the same time, it is fascinating, captivating and appealing for its art. A real champion is beautiful to look at – beautiful because a champion is elegant, harmonious and expressive, intense and communicative.

Many competitors can execute good and well-choreographed programmes, highlighted by difficult and spectacular elements, but very few are able to transform a good programme into a piece of art, a programme that we would like to watch forever. For a great skater, the jumps, the spins, the lifts, are only the instrument through which they express the music, as a piano to a pianist or a violin to a violinist. A “Great Skater” will not be remembered for the number of jumps executed in their programme, but rather for their personality, originality, for their moves on the ice; for the emotion transmitted to the audience, the contact created with their fans and for marking the path that others will try to follow.

Only for these acts – the creation of artistic images – will a skater be remembered through the decades. This is what makes our sport unique and magical and is what must be preserved as a precious diamond.

- *Sonia Bianchetti Garbato*

## Glenburn Spring Gala

**Date:** Sat 18<sup>th</sup> November 2006

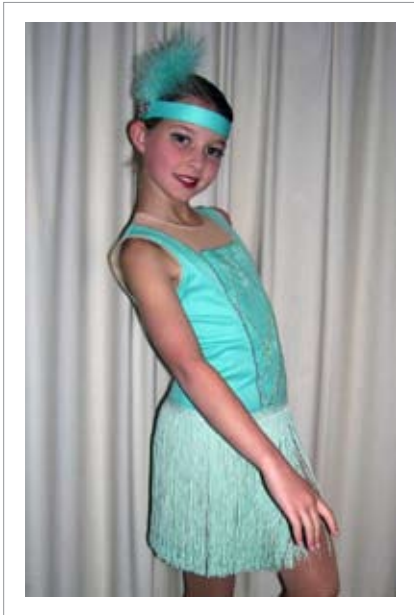
**Venue:** Avondale Ice Arena

**Time:** 4.45 – 7.45pm

**For more information contact:**

**Aslihan Ayiden on Mobile 021 266 8137**

**or email [asli@orcon.net.nz](mailto:asli@orcon.net.nz)**



**Name:** Amelia Prowse  
**Grade:** Juvenile  
**Date of birth:** 2nd August 1996  
**Place of birth:** Perth, Western Australia  
**Occupation:** Student at Shelly Park Primary  
**Home Club:** Auckland Ice Figure Skating Club  
**Main Training Rink:** Paradise Ice Arena, Botany Downs.  
**Year Started Skating:** 2004  
**Coaches:** Simon Thode & Debbie Darvill  
**Hobbies:** Reading, baking, swimming, spending time with my pet cats

**Main Achievements:**

2005 Autumn Champs - 2nd Skate School Advanced  
 2005 Auckland Club Champs - 2nd Skate School Advanced  
 2006 Glenburn Champs - 1st Elementary Ladies Under 10  
 2006 Auckland Club Champs - 1st Elementary Ladies Under 10  
 2006 North Islands Champs - 1st Synchronised - Botany Blades  
 2006 - Skated with the lead skaters from "Swan Lake on Ice"  
 2006 New Zealand Nationals - Competed in Juvenile grade at my first Nationals  
 1st Novice Synchronised - Botany Blades

## Happy Birthday!

Those that have had theirs already, better late than never! To those that haven't had theirs yet – best wishes in the future.

**September**

Kestra Laurent 20

**October**

Sarah Rictchie 7  
 Vicki Kuo 22  
 Doris Kuo 30

**November**

Alexandra Ley 9

**December**

Tristan Thode 25  
 Jimmy Yu Chun Kuo 27

## In Memoriam

### Norm Cameron (1943 – 2006)

Norm was a past President of both the Auckland Ice Figure Skating Club and the NZISA. He will be long remembered for his years of hard work and dedication, not only to figure skating – in which he competed as a young man – but also to ice hockey and curling, as well.

On behalf of each and every member of the Auckland Ice Figure Skating Club, I offer our sincere condolences to Kay Cameron, and to Carolyn, Christine, and Craig and their respective families, on their recent sad loss of a husband, father and friend.

*Dael Haynes  
 President, AIFSC*

## Medal Test Passes

The following Auckland Club Members passed tests in September 2006 - *well done skaters!*

September 2006

Tristan Thode	Gold Star Freeskate
Joel Watson	Intergold Stroking
Allie Rout	Inter Gold Freeskate

## Figure Skating on SKY

Wed 8 Nov 9pm, ESPN, 90 minutes

**US Figure Skating: Campbell's Cup from Cincinnati, Ohio**  
 (replay Thurs 9 Nov 3am, on ESPN and SKY Sport 1)

Sun 26 Nov 3 pm, ESPN, 3 hours

**ISU Grand Prix: Skate Canada, from Victoria, BC**  
 (replay Tues 28 Nov 5:30am, on ESPN and SKY Sport 1)  
 (replay Wed 29 Nov 4pm, SKY Sport 2)

Wed 29 Nov 9 pm, ESPN Digital, 3 hours

**ISU Grand Prix: Skate Canada, from Victoria, BC**  
 (replay Thurs 30 Nov 4am, SKY Sport 2)

Check programme guides for event details. The Campbell's Cup competition was held on 15th October; Skate Canada took place from the 2nd to the 5th November.

## For Sale

**Skating Gear**

- *Skating Sports Bag:* Large Grey/Navy with figure skate motif on sides \$30
  - *"Happiness is an Axle"* Tshirt (small adult) \$15,
  - *Figure Skates:* Graf Galaxy Extra Light: Ladies 7 medium \$350
- Phone 828 4742**